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**Mental Wealth Academy Steering Group, Partnership Agreement**

**Welcome and Introduction**

Welcome to the Mental Wealth Academy Steering Group. We are  
delighted that you’re interested in joining us to help make the Mental Wealth Academy an effective organisation. We are keen that the steering group is effective, well attended and productive. To help us do this we have put together this partnership agreement.  
  
The Mental Wealth Academy exists to use the experience of people with mental health problems to teach and train others. We are a group of experts by experience and professionals working together to train others to recognise and support people particularly at the early stages of mental health problems.  
  
The Mental Wealth Academy is currently in its early stages, and looking for people to join the steering group, who will help make this vision a reality. The steering group is responsible for guiding the operation of the Mental Wealth Academy.  
  
**Meetings**  
Steering group meetings are held every two months, on the last Wednesday of the month. These meetings last no longer than two hours. Papers are sent out a week before the meeting.  
  
Task group meetings can be held more often based on the purpose and objectives of the task group, and report back to the steering group.

**1. Our Purpose**  
The Mental Wealth Academy has been formed to allow people with lived experience of mental health problems to use the knowledge and skills we have, to benefit others.

We seek to:

* Support experts by experience to develop and deliver training about mental health.
* Ensure experts by experience are at the core of how we work and what we do.
* Connect others who are providing training about mental health.
* Help others to understand that mental health problems are not the end, and that early changes can make a big difference.
* We will conduct professionally guided research, assessing and supporting the purpose of the Mental Wealth Academy.

**2. Who are we**  
We are a group of professionals and experts by experience who:

* Work to grow the Mental Wealth Academy as a professionally supported, peer directed group.
* Commit to work together, respecting the roles we fill in the Mental Wealth Academy.
* Agree to cooperate the tasks necessary to help the Mental Wealth Academy develop training about mental health.

**3. Ownership**  
We know that everyone can suffer from mental health problems, however within this organisation we have clear boundaries between those who are members as professionals, and those as experts by experience. We commit to listening to everyone, while maintaining the principle of peer direction.  
Both roles are valuable.

**4. Our Role**  
We are a new organisation, as such the role we have will develop over time.  
We seek to develop and deliver training around mental health to be delivered by Experts by Experience. We use the skills and abilities we have to develop the Mental Wealth Academy, both as experts by experience and as people with skills, knowledge and talents, professional or otherwise. We are developing the organisation and structure that will be sustained in the longer term. We will identify training we can deliver.

**5. Our Values and Principles**  
So we can be an effective group that is **inclusive and welcoming** we expect partners to work in a way that upholds these principles:

* We commit to work together as a peer-direct professionally supported group.
* We show respect for each other and participate as equals.
* We listen to each other and consider different views and opinions carefully and with empathy.
* We work to make sure our group is inclusive, welcoming and that members feel at ease.
* Where necessary, we challenge constructively.
* We make decisions thoughtfully, taking into account different views.
* We are active partners committed to sharing the work of the group.
* We will take practical actions to make our vision a reality.
* We recognise that the expertise gained by experience has value, and work to ensure that value provided is rewarded.

**6. How we work together**  
We can only uphold values and principles if we commit to them in the way we work together. We :

* Try not to talk over other people.
* Listen to everyone’s views.
* Speak up and share their views.
* Recognise and promote the expertise each of us brings to the Mental Wealth Academy.
* Engage with each other and ensure even the quiet voices are heard.
* Let the Chair know if you have any specific access needs (e.g. large print papers; a support worker to accompany you; regular breaks etc.) so we can make the meetings work as well as possible for everyone.

**7. How we work together – Our Commitments**

* We will form task groups around themes of work and we will seek to involve experts and professionals with a particular interest or skill in this area.
* Task groups will regularly feed back to the steering group.
* The voice of lived experience will be at the heart of decision making.
* Currently decisions are made through discussion and consensus, we will work towards a more formal constitutional decision making process.
* The steering group is responsible for guiding the operation of the Mental Wealth Academy; where the steering group has delegated authority, task groups can make decisions and feedback to the steering group.
* We will have breaks during meetings and stick to times set.
* Information will be shared with all members of the group ahead of time.

**8. How we work together – Activity and involvement**  
As a part of the Mental Wealth Academy, we:

* Give our time consistently to further the shared goals.
* Use the shared workplan to guide our goals.
* Use the skills and expertise we have, and ask for help when we don’t have the necessary skills and expertise.
* Let others know if we are risk of overcommitting.

**9. How we work together – Support and expectations**  
We understand that people involved in the Mental Wealth Academy are likely to have both good and bad patches. We agree the tasks we can commit to, and recognise that there will be times when other matters need to take priority. To support each other we will:

* Look after our own and each other’s mental health, by kindness and awareness of the needs we each have.
* Provide support for each other where needed, to ensure that we can further the Mental Wealth Academy.
* Let others know if we are unable to carry out our own tasks for a time so that others can do what is needed.
* Recognise that at times we need to step back and focus on other priorities.
* Allow space for others for people to return to the Mental Wealth Academy once they are able.
* Maintain communication with all members regardless of current activities.

**10. How we work together – Workplan and progress**  
We co-operate to develop the work-plan, identifying the tasks required to ensure the success of the Mental Wealth Academy.  
We commit to developing the Mental Wealth Academy by following the agreed work-plan, and where we don't agree with the work-plan we discuss changing the shared plan.

This is a pledge for us to commit to.

**As a member of the Mental Wealth Academy Steering Group I pledge to:**

**Uphold the values, principles and behaviour of the group.**

**Attend the meetings consistently.**

**Speak up if something about the group, or the way it is run doesn’t work for me.**

**Be an active group member.**

**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Organisation ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**